



## Townsend Town Council Reorganization and Meeting

### Minutes

June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023 @ 7:00 pm

VIA CONFERENCE CALL &  
Town Hall

#### 7:00 pm Re-Organization Meeting

I. Call to Order: 7:00 pm

II. Opening Ceremonies

A. Roll Call: Mayor S. Lobdell,  
Councilwoman E. Clarke,  
Councilwoman S. Rojas,  
Councilman J. Mertz, Town  
Engineer E. Van-Otoo, Police

Chief R. Longo, Town Manager A. Tantillo, Town Solicitor L. Hatfield, and Town Clerk R. Rivera.  
Councilman E. Dugan absent.

B. Pledge of Allegiance: All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

C. Recognition of Visitors:

1. Alan Emsley, Henry Glanding, Jay Fisher, Joseph Bangura, Jonathan Bates, Matthew Chapman, Elizabeth Chapman, Marcus Surh, Cassandra Suhr, Sean Keenan.

D. Announcements:

1. CM Mertz thanked the following personnel for helping him through his medical issue during the Town Fair:

- a. The Townsend Fire Company
- b. New Castle County Paramedics
- c. Dr. Higgins at Christiana Care
- d. Dr. Levine at Christiana Care
- e. Nurse Rachel Gagman at Christiana Care

2. CW Rojas thanked all those who helped during the Town Fair and made a special acknowledgement to:

- a. Loraine Gorman
- b. Latisha Scott
- c. The Town's First Annual Grand Marshal Kathy Jennings.

III. Citizens Comments & Participation

A. Mr. Keenan stated he lives on Main Street and advised the Town to provide more advertisement regarding no parking on Main Street for the Town Parade. Mr. Keenan suggested the Town to send a letter addressing the no parking.

1. Mayor Lobdell and TM Tantillo advised it was advertised on all sites, including via CodeRED.

2. Mayor Lobdell thanked Mr. Keenan for bringing this concern to the Town's attention and advised the Town will make note for next year.

Town Meetings will return to both an in person and a virtual format.

Those wishing to attend virtually may dial **1(301)715-8592**. When directed, provide following meeting ID **827- 6421-7575#** and then the following password **361631#** to enter the meeting. If you choose to access the meeting online click the following link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82764217575?pwd=aHI4RDhTZ0xiME1HV0ZOcHRxSHZ3QT09>

Residents will be able to view documents posted to the meeting tab on the Town website at <https://townsend.delaware.gov> or by joining the meeting via computer.

- B. Mr. Keenan advised there is cement concrete in front of 204 Main Street and requested to assist the Town in removing the concrete. TM Tantillo advised she will reach out to DelDOT to have this satisfied.

**IV.** Adoption of Agenda.

- A. *CM Rojas made a motion to approve the agenda. CW Clarke seconded the motion. Voice vote of Council: all yea's.*

- 1. Council adopted the agenda.

**V.** Approval / Rejection of Minutes

- A. **ACTION ITEM:** Approval/ Rejection of Town Council Minutes from the April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Town Council Public Hearing.
- B. **ACTION ITEM:** Approval/ Rejection of Town Council Minutes from the April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Town Council Meeting Executive Session.
- C. **ACTION ITEM:** Approval/ Rejection of Town Council Minutes from the April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Town Council Special Meeting Executive Session.
- D. **ACTION ITEM:** Approval/ Rejection of Town Council Minutes from the May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Town Council Meeting.
- E. **ACTION ITEM:** Approval/ Rejection of Town Council Minutes from the May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Town Council Meeting Executive Session.
- F. **ACTION ITEM:** Approval/ Rejection of Town Council Minutes from the May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Town Council Public Hearing.
- G. **ACTION ITEM:** Approval/ Rejection of Town Council Minutes from the May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Town Council Special Meeting.
- H. *CM Mertz made a motion to combine Action Items A through G for approval. CW Rojas seconded the motion. Voice vote of Council: all yea's.*

- 1. Council approved the Town Council Minutes from the:
  - a. April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Town Council Public Hearing.
  - b. April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Town Council Meeting Executive Session.
  - c. April 25<sup>th</sup> Town Council Special Meeting Executive Session.
  - d. May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Town Council Meeting.
  - e. May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Town Council Meeting Executive Session.
  - f. May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Town Council Public Hearing.
  - g. May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Town Council Special Meeting.

**VI. ACTION ITEM:** Discussion and Possible Vote to amend the recommended Charter Changes to allow for the State Representative's requests.

- A. TM Tantillo briefly reminded Council of the steps that lead to and the current step the recommended Charter Changes have been presented to the state legislature for possible approval by the State. TM Tantillo read the list of recommended amendments received by Representative Spiegelman, as listed in the Town Manager's Report. TM Tantillo advised no resolution is needed to amend the approved recommended Charter Changes.
- B. *CM Mertz made a motion on line 634 of House Bill 139, to strike, suppress riotous, disorderly or turbulent assemblages of persons and amend to read as, it shall be the duty of the police force to enforce all state and municipal laws in all. CW Clarke seconded the motion. Voice vote of Council: all yea's.*

- 1. Council approved amendment for line 634 of House Bill 139, of the recommended Charter Changes that have been submitted to Representative Spiegelman; to read as, "it shall be the duty of the police force to enforce all state and municipal laws in all public ways and places of the Town..."

- C. TM Tantillo advised she will make the changes to the recommended Charter Changes for Representative Spiegelman to reintroduce to the State Legislature.

**VII.** Introduction of Incoming Council Members:

- A. TC Rivera thanked the previous Council Members for their time serving on Town Council.
  - 1. Mrs. Clarke stated she enjoyed her time serving on the Town Council and working with the Town Staff. Additionally, if the opportunity presents itself, she would like to return in the future.
  - 2. Mayor Lobdell recognized Mr. Dugan for his time serving on the Town Council.
- B. TC Rivera introduced the incoming Council members and stated their term of office:
  - 1. Dr. Joseph Bangura will serve a two-year term of office.
  - 2. Mr. Matthew W. Chapman will serve a two-year term of office.
  - 3. Dr. Joshua Mertz will serve a one-year term of office.
  - 4. Mr. Marcus W. Suhr will serve a two-year term of office.

**VIII.** Oath of Office for newly elected Council Members

- A. TC Rivera lead the Oath of Office for each Council Member to recite as they were sworn in.
- B. The following Councilmembers were sworn in:
  - 1. Dr. Joseph Bangura for a two-year term of office.
  - 2. Mr. Matthew W. Chapman for a two-year term of office.
  - 3. Dr. Joshua Mertz for a one-year term of office.
  - 4. Mr. Marcus W. Suhr for a two-year term of office.

**IX.** Nomination and Election of Town Mayor for one (1) year term

- A. TC Rivera presented the suggested election process as provided by TS Hatfield. CM Mertz provided a reading of the suggested election process.
- B. *CM Mertz made a motion to accept the process as provided by TS Hatfield . CM Chapman seconded the motion.*
  - 1. *Roll Call Vote of Council: CM Bangura – yea, CM Chapman – yea, CM Lobdell – yea, CM Mertz – yea, and CM Suhr – yea.*
    - a. Council accepted the suggested election process as provided by TS Hatfield.
- C. *CM Mertz made a motion to allow each Council Member three to five minutes to speak regarding why they would like to serve as Mayor. CM Lobdell seconded the motion. Voice vote of Council: all yea's.*
  - 1. Council opened the floor for all members to speak for three to five minutes explaining why they would like to serve as Mayor.
  - 2. The following Council members provided reasons as to why they would like to serve as Mayor:
    - a. CM Mertz
    - b. CM Lobdell
- D. Council opened the floor for additional discussion on why CM Lobdell and CM Mertz both choose to serve as Mayor.
- E. *CM Mertz made a motion to open the floor for nominations. CM Lobdell seconded the motion. Voice vote of Council: all yea's.*

1. Council opened the floor for nominations:
  2. CM Bangura made a motion to nominate CM Lobdell for Mayor.
  3. CM Suhr made a motion to nominate CM Mertz for Mayor.
- F. TC Rivera announced nominations are closed.
- G. *CM Mertz made a motion to vote for CM Mertz nominee. CM Chapman seconded the motion.*
1. *Roll Call Vote of Council: CM Bangura – nay, CM Chapman – abstained, CM Lobdell – abstained, CM Mertz – yea, and CM Suhr – yea.*
    - a. Motion to vote for CM Mertz nominee as Mayor failed.
- H. *CM Bangura made a motion to vote for CM Lobdell nominee. CM Chapman seconded the motion.*
1. *Roll Call Vote of Council: CM Bangura – yea, CM Chapman – yea, CM Lobdell – yea, CM Mertz – nay, and CM Suhr – abstained.*
  2. Council voted CM Lobdell as Mayor.
- X.** Oath of Office for Mayor
- A. TC Rivera lead the Oath of Office for CM Lobdell to recite as he is sworn in.
  - B. CM Lobdell sworn in as Town Mayor for a one-year term.
  - C. TC Rivera returned the meeting to Mayor Lobdell.
- XI.** Reorganization of Committees by Town Mayor
- A. Mayor Lobdell advised he would like to push assignment of Committees to allow the Council members time to provide their opinion on what committee they would like to lead.
  - B. FO Helms advised Finance Committee members are needed to approve payables for the Town. TM Tantillo confirmed the Financial Policy and the Purchasing Policy state the Finance Committee must review payables that have been reviewed by the Town Manager. TM Tantillo advised the Mayor needs to be on the Finance Committee.
  - C. Mayor Lobdell appointed the following Council members to the Finance Committee:
    1. Mayor Lobdell
    2. CM Mertz
- XII.** Adjournment of Reorganization Meeting.
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- A. *CM Mertz made a motion to adjourn the reorganization meeting. CM Suhr seconded the motion. Voice vote of Council: all yea's.*
1. Council adjourned the meeting at 7:51 pm.
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### **7:45 pm Town Council Meeting**

- I. Call to Order: 8:03 pm
- II. Opening Ceremonies
  - B. Roll Call: Mayor S. Lobdell, Councilman J. Mertz, Councilman M. Suhr, Councilman M. Chapman, Councilman J. Bangura
  - C. Pledge of Allegiance: All present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.
  - D. Recognition of Visitors: NCC D. Carter, Eschalla Clarke, Alan Emsley, J. Fisher, Elizabeth Chapman, Christina Suhr, Jonathan Bates, and Edgar Dugan.
- E. Announcements:

1. None.

### III. Citizens Comments & Participation

- a. Jonathan Bates President of TV I (Townsend Village I) Homeowner Association brought to the Council's attention the following:
  - i. Mr. Bates requested an update on the turn of open spaces. Mayor Lobdell advised the developer is still working on encroachment issues. TS Hatfield advised she has had preliminary discussions with the developer's attorney.
  - ii. Mr. Bates advised he met with the inspector for the Town regarding the Phase 1 - Storm Water Ponds; explaining, that he believes the issue has not been resolved and there is a sinkhole with a rusted pipe through the embankment.
    1. TE Van-Otoo advised he has spoken with inspector Mr. Valentine regarding this concern. TE Van-Otoo will meet with Mr. Bates to perform a walkthrough of the site.
  - iii. Mr. Bates informed Council there is a County Stormwater Management program that are available, however individual developments are ineligible to participate in. Mr. Bates requested the Towns assistance on stormwater management. Mayor Lobdell advised he is open to having this discussion.
  - iv. Mr. Bates advised residents have submitted complaints to DSP (Delaware State Police) regarding noise ordinance violations and was advised by DSP they only enforce NCC (New Castle County) noise ordinances.
    1. TM Tantillo advised; residents may submit their complaints regarding noise ordinances to the Town.
    2. Chief Longo advised he will discuss noise violations with DSP.
  - v. Mr. Bates advised there are several light violations but was unable to find the Towns light ordinance. TM Tantillo advised the Planning Commission is working on reissuing a new light ordinance.
- b. Mrs. Clarke called attention to the federal holiday Juneteenth which is coming up. Mrs. Clarke advised the Town has a Juneteenth flag that may be flown the day of.
- c. Mr. Emsley advised the Town did a great job on the fair and parade.

### IV. Adoption of Agenda.

- a. *CM Mertz made a motion to strike items 5,f,1,2,3, and 4 from the agenda and move them to the next earliest meeting. CM Chapman seconded the motion. Voice vote of Council: all yea's.*
  - i. Council struck the following items from the agenda:
    1. ACTION ITEM: Discussion and possible vote on Resolution 2023-010 A Resolution to Recognize Councilman Edgar Dugan.
    2. ACTION ITEM: Discussion and possible vote on Resolution 2023-011 A Resolution to Recognize Councilwoman Eschalla Clarke.
    3. ACTION ITEM: Discussion and possible vote on Resolution 2023-012 A Resolution to Recognize Councilwoman Sheryl Rojas.
    4. ACTION ITEM: Discussion and possible vote to authorize the repairs/ replacement of the Town Park gazebo façade.
- b. *CM Mertz made a motion to adopt the agenda as amended. CM Bangura seconded the motion. Voice vote of Council: all yea's.*

- i. Council adopted the agenda as amended.

**V. Reports:**

a. Mayor

- i. None.

b. New Castle County Councilman David Carter

- i. NCC Carter complimented the Town on the fair and parade. NCC Carter advised it provided him a great opportunity to show residents the different NCC programs available.
- ii. NCC Carter confirmed the County Budget has approved fifteen million dollars for housing.
- iii. NCC Carter confirmed the Regional Park up North is on schedule and may be opening in July.
- iv. NCC Carter confirmed he is continuing work on the Wiggins Mill Park and has requested additional funding for the park project. NCC Carter advised he is working with the neighboring farmer on irrigation. Additionally, the Wiggins Mill Park may open rough trails in the Fall or Spring.
- v. NCC Carter confirmed he is working with Interfaith Community Housing of Delaware, a non-profit organization, on the downtown revitalization of Townsend. NCC Carter explained their goal is to provide moderate priced housing in the old town development.
- vi. NCC Carter advised he is continuing to work on community policing and will reach out once he has more details.
- vii. NCC Carter advised NCC is continuing to work on the County Tax Assessment.
  - 1. Mayor Lobdell noted this is a State Law requirement not an additional revenue request from NCC. Additionally, the assessment is for appraisal not to raise taxes.
- viii. TM Tantillo advised she will schedule a meeting for Council and NCC Carter to further discuss items NCC Carter is working with the Town on. Additionally, she is working with TS Hatfield on the County Park transfer.

c. Town of Townsend Police Chief's Report

- i. Mayor Lobdell noted Council previously changed how meeting were run, whereas now reports are no longer read during the meeting as they are issued beforehand and the floor is open to questions pertaining to the reports provided. Mayor Lobdell explained the only report provided verbally is from TS Hatfield due to legal matters.
- ii. Chief Longo advised the Police Department is able to provide enforcement on noise and light ordinances when reported. Chief Longo advised DSP runs a large area. Additionally, DSP dispatch will prioritize calls and will follow NCC ordinances.

d. Town Solicitor Lisa Hatfield

- i. TS Hatfield advised there are no new reports, however a report and updates will be provided at the next meeting.

e. Town Engineer Edwin Van-Otoo

- i. Council briefly discussed irrigation solutions for the Town Municipal Park.
  - 1. TM Tantillo explained the previous Council has authorized to match ARPA (American Rescue Plan) funds towards the ORPT (Outdoor Recreation, Parks and Tourism) grant that has been received by the Town for this project. TM Tantillo advised Council may look on expanding the project with working with ORPT and/or other grants.

2. TE Van-Otoo noted he will look into utilizing wells for irrigation. CM Chapman will provide contact information to TE Van-Otoo of a well company the Town may use for this project.
  - ii. TE Van-Otoo explained the developer is dealing with encroachment issues, therefore the process of open space dedication has been put on hold. Noting, the Town is unable to accept open space with encroachments. TM Tantillo advised this will be discussed further in an executive session.
  - iii. TE Van-Otoo advised LifeHouse church has plans to expand and is waiting on them to make the require plan revisions. Mayor Lobdell noted the expansion is for the school. TM Tantillo confirmed it has been advised that it is intended to be a private school.
  - iv. TS Hatfield confirmed following the last meeting, all sinkholes have been determined as public easement space. TM Tantillo confirmed the sinkhole project will moved forward as approved.
- f. Town Manager Antonina Tantillo
- i. TM Tantillo confirmed the Town has a list of curbs that need paint correction. TM Tantillo advised this should be finished by end of the month, along with the installation of solar speed signs.
  - ii. CM Mertz noted resident in TV II (Townsend Village II) West are parking incorrectly. TM Tantillo noted this was stated on the letter that was sent to residents addressing parking concerns. Chief Longo advised he is aware of this issue and has been reaching out to residents in violation to remind them of the parking concerns.
  - iii. CM Mertz noted there are discussions regarding the placement of a Pole Barn for the Public Works Department. TM Tantillo advised an update is forthcoming.
  - iv. CM Mertz advised there are discussions regarding the pursuit of installing the missing trees for TV II. CM Chapman advised the Town will also need to look into longer term management for how the Town will supply water to the trees.
  - v. TM Tantillo noted there were 40 inspections performed and no rental licenses for the Month of May.
  - vi. TM Tantillo explained the annexation process for Council. Noting, the property must be contiguous, and owners interested must follow these generally listed steps.:
    1. Planning Commission
    2. Town Council
    3. Request for authorization must be approved from those supplying utilities and services, including: New Castle County, Police Department, Artesian, Chesapeake Utility, and any additional entities.
    4. NCC must provide a resolution to allow the Town to annex the property.
    5. The Town Council will determine if they would like to annex the property.
    6. PLUS (Preliminary Land Use Services) will provide approval of annexation based on reviews from the surrounding municipalities.
    7. The Town Council will make a final approval.
  - vii. **ACTION ITEM:** Discussion and possible vote regarding Town Municipal Park cameras.
    1. Mayor Lobdell noted this was previously discussed at a past meeting.
    2. Chief Longo reintroduced the quotes received.
      - a. Advantech - provides cameras for the school and DeIDOT.
      - b. Anaconda - provides cameras for the Town buildings.

3. Chief Longo explained he was able to obtain grants and has requested a grant assignment transfer. Chief Longo advised this will provide a total of \$18,000.00 in grant funding that may be used to cover the cost of the project.
4. Chief Longo confirmed he has received responses for the questions that were asked at the previous meeting:
  - a. The cameras will be transmitted directly to the Police Department.
  - b. To have a server at the Park they will need approximately two feet by two feet of space.
  - c. The quoted amounts are at the State Contract rate.
  - d. Cradlepoint Routers will provide internet connectivity.
  - e. There are contracts available if the Town pays in advance with increments of five years.
  - f. The Town may need to look into different cameras if Council chose a non-cloud option. Explaining, larger hard drives, camera licensing software, support plan, and a larger enclosure will be needed.
5. Chief Longo advised his recommendation is Advantech. Council briefly discussed the quotes.
6. *CM Mertz made a motion to table the vote regarding Town Municipal Park cameras. CM Chapman seconded the motion. Voice vote of Council: all yea's.*
  - a. Council tabled the vote regarding Town Municipal Park cameras and requested Advantech to provide a presentation at the July meeting.
- viii. Discussion regarding Town Council rules.
  1. Mayor Lobdell advised there are no rules in place on how to run meetings, therefore CM Mertz and himself provided recommendations. Mayor Lobdell advised Council to review the two options provided for further discussion and vote at a later meeting.
  2. TM Tantillo advised she would like to have a meeting later this month that will discuss FOIA (Freedom of Information Act) and briefly explained quorum per FOIA.
  3. TM Tantillo advised Council is able to add recommendations to the Council rules options provided. TM Tantillo advised recommendations should be brought to her.

## VI. Committee Reports

### A. **Finance Committee:** CM Lobdell and CM Mertz

1. Review and possible discussion on the April 2023 Budget vs. Actual Reports.
  - a. FO Helms confirmed Town is on budget and provided the following notes regarding the general budget:
    - i. The actual revenues are greater than the expenses.
    - ii. The Town should be at 80 % of the Budget.
    - iii. The Town is at 74 % of the revenues.
    - iv. The Town is at approximately 69 % of the expenditure.
2. TM Tantillo advised the new Council will receive the current years budget and the recently adopted budget that will become effect July 1st.

3. Council briefly discussed re-allocation of the Community Engagement Committee event donations to future Town events and what additional events the Town typically provides to residents.

**B. Human Resources Committee:**

1. None

**C. Public Works Committee:**

1. None

**D. Land Use and Development Committee:**

1. None

**E. Veterans Committee:**

1. None

**F. Public Safety Committee:**

1. None

**G. Community Engagement Committee:**

1. None

**H. Code Review Committee:**

1. None

**I. National Wildlife and Historic Preservation Committee:**

1. None

**VII. Adjournment.**

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- a. TM Tantillo advised the next meeting will be held on June 21<sup>st</sup>. TM Tantillo noted this will be a Town Council special meeting. Additionally, the Town Council special meetings are scheduled on an as needed basis.
  - b. Mr. Dugan, former Councilman Dugan, brought an art piece as a parting gift to the Town. Mr. Dugan confirmed he served as a Councilman for the Town of Townsend for six years. Mr. Dugan stated it was a pleasure serving on Council and noted a lot has been done and changed for the better. Mr. Dugan noted the Council has always been a political and everyone cared for the best of the Town. Mr. Dugan encouraged the new members to continue to do the right thing and advised the new members they may reach out to him.
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- c. *CM Mertz made a motion to adjourn the meeting. CM Chapman seconded the motion. Voice vote of Council: all yea's.*
    - i. Council adjourned the meeting at 9:37 pm.
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